

AMAA news

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AMAA Representatives with the President of the Republic of Karabagh



AMAA Annual Meeting, Concert and Banquet
AEWC
Bilezikians Visit Armenia
Avedisian School Update
Pastors' Prayer Retreat in Armenia
Summer Camps
Syria Relief



Opening ceremony of Bilezikian Playground in Shushi, Karabagh

AMAA NEWS

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Cover Photo: **L to R:** Arsen Manassian, Harout Nercessian, Liliana and Levon Filian, President Bako Sahakyan, Charles, Doreen and Jeffrey Bilezikian

Editorial Message

Faith Over Fear

Levon Filian

We all experience challenging times in our lives that may cause us to fear the unknown, the uncertainties and the unexpected. Our faith and trust in God are put to a test. We must be prepared to choose between faith in God or surrendering to fear.

During the birth of Jesus, the Bible refers to four episodes where fear existed but all were overcome by faith.

In Matthew 2:20 an angel appeared to Joseph and told him: "**Joseph, do not be afraid**" to take Mary your wife. Joseph had to choose between fear and faith. Between what people may say or what God has said.

In Luke 1:13 the angel told the old priest: "**Zacharias do not be afraid,**" for your prayer has been heard. He was a righteous man, believed in prayers, but was impatient. God calls us to have faith in Him and in His timing.

In Luke 1:30 and 38 the angel told Mary: "**Do not be afraid,**" for you have found favor with God. You will conceive a child and shall call him Jesus. Mary replied, "Let it be to me according to your word." What a testimony of full faith and full surrender to God's will.

In Luke 2:9-10 the angel appeared to the shepherds and "**they were greatly afraid.**" Then the angel said: "**Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.**" And the shepherds made haste to look for Jesus. God calls all of us to look for the Savior.

It gives us great joy to share this message with you and to invite you to put your faith in God, to listen to His command, wait for His timing, commit our lives according to His Word, and make haste to meet the Savior.

Please help us spread the Good News of faith over fear in 24 countries around the world.

We come to you and your loved ones with great joy to wish you all:

**A Blessed Christmas
and a Happy New Year!**

**Հնրհաւոր Նոր Տարի
Եւ Սուրբ Ծնունդ**



Back to Basics

Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian*

Identity crisis has been discussed over and over during the last decade worldwide, and especially in the United States among the buster (30 to 50) and boomer (51 to 65) generations. The blessings of asking questions like "Who are we?" or "Why are we doing what we're doing?" are that they are elevating the new generation to a solid understanding and total commitment. So, I would like to ask, "Who is the AMAA?" or "Why is the AMAA doing what it is doing?" while praying that these questions will lead to fruitful results.

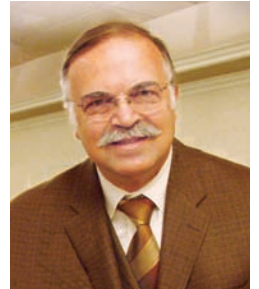
In order to answer similar questions, people tend to dig into history. The history of the AMAA suggests that the AMAA, established in 1918, is the missionary arm of the Armenian Evangelical Church. I am not sure if that historical fact is satisfactory to answer the crucial questions we are struggling with.

In the book of Exodus, when the people were slaves in the land of Egypt, God sent Moses to Pharaoh to tell him "Let my people go" in order to free His people. God did and does communicate His divine message through instruments or human beings as messengers. In this case, God chose a human instrument, Moses, to carry out His divine plan. Moses' reaction was "I have never been eloquent, I'm slow of speech and tongue" (Ex. 4:10). Actually, I don't think Moses was reluctant to obey because he was slow of speech, but because he didn't believe Pharaoh would listen. As a matter of fact, we need to realize that God's call is always accompanied by God's gift to complete that calling. God said: "Go, I will help you speak, and will teach you what to say." (Ex. 4:12). God was not asking Moses his opinion, neither is He asking our opinion when He calls us. He has a plan and has chosen Moses and now us to be faithful; He has given Moses an order.

I already see clearly in the light of day God's calling to us, to the Armenian Evangelical Church and to the AMAA! He called us, He equipped us, He gifted us and He blessed us (look at the AMAA today) to obey His calling.

But the story has a more interesting and challenging continuation. Moses got discouraged and came back to God in chapter 6:30 saying: "I speak with faltering lips, why would Pharaoh listen to me." God patiently explains and teaches Moses and tells him: "I have made you like God to Pharaoh"... LIKE GOD? Definitely this does not mean Moses or anyone else is God. It simply means Moses was God's representative, God's messenger. We know that Pharaoh and his people always acknowledged Pharaoh as god, and

now, God is saying I am God and you, Moses, are going to represent me in his face. Moses is not God; he is *like* God to Pharaoh. The most important lesson I learn is that Moses was not God; he was God's messenger to Pharaoh. Moses is not the author of the message, he doesn't have, can not have, is not allowed to have any message or agenda for Pharaoh. He is to OBEY God, to glorify God, period. The AMAA doesn't have, can't have, and is not allowed to have any message or agenda. The AMAA's mission is to be the messenger of God and to carry on the Good News of the Gospel to the nations.



It sounds like Jesus, doesn't it? Jesus is the "image of God" (Col. 1:15), and Jesus is the "exact representation of God" (Heb. 1:3). God initiated the salvation plan and Jesus was the agent to accomplish that salvation plan on the cross. Moses was *like* God to Pharaoh and Jesus was God to us. Afterwards, Jesus himself commissioned His followers to proclaim His Gospel to the nations. Paul understands that perfectly and states: "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as if God were making His appeal through us" (II Cor. 5:20). This is a HUGE responsibility on our shoulders; we are carrying Christ into the nations. We may be the only Christians that some people will know and through us they will know Jesus. In other words, their understanding of Christianity and who Christ is depends on the testimony we display in words and deeds. Therefore, we, the AMAA, are *like* Christ to the nations in the same way that Moses was *like* God to Pharaoh. We all understand that like the great theologian has said that God to the starving person is best represented in a loaf of bread. Jesus said "If anyone gives even a cup of cold water..." (Matt.10:42).

The AMAA is successfully giving the *bread* and the *water* in a variety of educational and humanitarian organized projects. But the projects are not our purpose. The AMAA has been offering the *loaf of bread* and a *cup of cold water* to the starving and dehydrated people for about 95 years in 24 countries faithfully, in order to be OBEDIENT to God's calling, in order to REPRESENT God and in order to GLORIFY God. □

* Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian is the Senior Pastor of the Evangelical Church of Armenia and Field Director of the AMAA.

AMAA Holds 93rd Annual Meeting At Paramus Headquarters

The 93rd Annual Meeting of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) was held at the AMAA Headquarters in Paramus, NJ on October 13. Over 80 members including Board members, pastors, representatives of church and mission committees, representatives of Armenian Evangelical Unions throughout the world and delegates from affiliate groups were present to review the service ministries of the AMAA.

President Joseph Zeronian presided at the Meeting where reports were presented by the AMAA Committees and delegates.

During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, over \$7,000,000 was distributed to support 140 projects in 24 countries around the world. The Annual Meeting also reflected on the Association's finances and reviewed reports of the Treasurer and the independent auditors.

The AMAA general membership elected nine individuals by mail-in ballot. The following new Board of Directors members, Class of 2015, were announced at the Annual Meeting on October 13. H. Steven Aharonian, M.D., Rafi Balabanian, D.D.S., Rev. Berj



Gulleyan, Nurhan Helvacian, Ph.D., John Paul Kassabian, M.D., Seta Loshkajian Nalbandian, Jeanmarie Papelian, Esq., Carlos Taraktzian and Michael Voskian, D.M.D.

At the meeting, five new members were also elected to the AMAA's Nominating Committee: H. Steven Aharonian, M.D., Joyce Stein, Rev. Ara Guekguezian, George Phillips, Sr. Esq., and Rev. Ronald Tovmassian.

On October 14, AMAA members and guests joined the Armenian Presbyterian

Church congregation in Paramus for a special service of praise for the AMAA. The guest preachers were Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian and Rev. Megrdoch Karagoezian. During the worship service, the newly elected members of the AMAA Board of Directors, the current Board members and Board officers were installed by Rev. Joseph Matossian, Minister to AEUNA. A special prayer was offered in memory of those members and friends who made the transition from this life to Life Eternal during the past year. □



Our Mission in Motion

AMAA Annual Meeting Dinner and Concert

With a theme of "Our Mission in Motion", the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) held its Annual Meeting Dinner on October 13 at the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, NJ. Over 200 guests attended the event which was followed by a concert.

Anita Buchakjian, AMAA Board member and Chair of the event, welcomed the guests and thanked everyone who helped in the success.

Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA, greeted the guests and introduced the dignitaries and special friends of the AMAA. The AMAA was honored by the presence of representatives from a number of Armenian organizations. These special guests included The Honorable Garen Nazarian, Armenian UN Ambassador and his wife, Nana; Valentine Berberian, ARS of Eastern USA; John and Betty Cherkezian, of the AGBU; Rev. Thomas Garabedian, Apostolic Exarchate for Armenian Catholics; Irina Lazarian of the Armenian Fund, USA; Very Rev. Fr. Simeon Odabashian, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America; Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, and Ani Tchaghlasian, ARF Central Committee.

Mr. Filian thanked the guests for their support of the AMAA and challenged them to continue supporting our "Mission in Motion."

Mezzo-Soprano Solange Merdinian opened the program and led the guests in beautiful renditions of the national anthems of the United States and Armenia which were followed by a blessing by Rev. Berj Gulleyan, Pastor of the Armenian Presbyterian Church.



AMAA staff members pictured with the Executive Director Levon Filian and Board member Anita Buchakjian.



L to R: Levon and Liliana Filian, Nana and Ambassador Garen Nazarian

After dinner, guests proceeded to the Church for a beautiful concert performance by Hampartsoum Djabourian, Canadian-Armenian clarinetist and duduk master. Mr. Djabourian who is recognized in both North America and abroad, has devoted many years of study to the duduk, a traditional Armenian double-reed made of apricot wood. He was accompanied by the Komidas Chamber Orchestra conducted by Alexander Anisimov. Mr. Anisimov, who was born in Russia, has performed as a soloist and conductor with various orchestras around the world. In 2009, he was admitted to the Association of Russian Composers and in 2011 received his Ph.D. The AMAA wishes to thank Paul Nercessian of Montreal who was instrumental in planning and organizing this concert.

A dessert reception was held following the concert in the church's Hekemian Fellowship Hall where the guests had an opportunity for fellowship and to meet the performers.

The AMAA thanks Serge and Anita Buchakjian for underwriting the cost of the dinner and the other sponsors who generously contributed to the success of this event. Thank you all. □



L to R: Anita Buchakjian, Joseph Zeronian, Ed. D. and Tom Momjian, Esq.



Soloist Solange Merdinian



L to R: Houri Melkonian, Harout Nercessian and Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian



Rev. Berj Gulleyan



Vahram and Lucienne Aynilian



L to R: Anna Sermabeikian, Alice Philibosian, Anita Buchakjian and Seta Nalbandian



L to R: Alice Philibosian, Celia Martaian, Ann Krikorian and Arpine Aynilian



L to R: Paul Nercessian, Anita Buchakjian, Levon Filian and Hampic Djabourian



L to R: Priya Katra, Andreas Roubian, Dr. & Mrs. Raffi and Shoghag Hovanessian

Armenian Evangelical World Council Holds Biennial Meeting in October

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, AEW C Executive Director

The Biennial Meeting of the Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC) was held October 12 at the Headquarters of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) in Paramus, NJ.

The following officers and representatives of the AEW C member organizations were in attendance: Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian — President; Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian — Executive Director; Rev. Dr. René Leonian — Vice President; Rev. Megr ditch Karagoezian — Secretary; Joyce Philibosian Stein, Rev. Nishan Bakalian, Rev. Joel Mikaelian, Rev. Joseph Matossian, Levon Filian, Dr. Joseph Zeronian, and Rev. Gilbert Leonian. Unable to attend were: Rev. Haroutune Selimian and Albert Momjian, Esq.

The Council acted upon the following:

1. Received with thanks the reports of the President and the Executive Director.

2. Approved the Dialogue Committee's Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) between the AEW C and the Holy See of Etchmiadzin. Following the ratification, there will be a joint communiqué to the news media.

3. Received the progress report of the Second Session of the Genocide Centennial Committee which was held on September 20, 2012 in Yerevan, Armenia. The Committee will keep all participating organizations posted about its future plans.

4. Received the report prepared and presented by the President of Armenian Evangelical Union of Eurasia. It was resolved that for further evaluation and for the purpose of taking concrete steps, the AMAA will appoint a committee to visit the important Armenian Evangelical centers of Eurasia and make its recommendations.

5. The Council made special object of prayer and deliberation the situation of the Armenian community in Syria, and specially the status of the Armenian Evangelical community. It was resolved to continue its moral and financial support.

6. The Council approved the plan of an All-Armenian Pastors' Retreat to be held from April 8-12, 2013, at the Armenian Evangelical Camp in La Source (Evian) France. The retreat will be financially supported by AEW C, AMAA and the Stephen Philibosian Foundation. In addition, each participant will contribute its share to the total expenses.

7. The Council resolved to hold a mid-year special meeting on the eve of the Pastors' Retreat on April 7, 2013, at the La Source campsite.

8. The year 2013 marks the 95th anniversary of the AMAA. Along with various celebrations, the AMAA administration is planning to organize a grand tour to Armenia, details of which will be communicated in the forthcoming months.

9. The election of the officers was held. The following were elected: Rev. Joel Mikaelian — President; Rev. Megr ditch Karagoezian — Vice President; Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian — Secretary; Dr. Nurhan Helvacian — Treasurer. The term of their services begins on January 1, 2013 and ends on December 31, 2014.

10. It was resolved to hold the next Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee of the AEW C on October 11, 2013 at the Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown, MA. □



Seated L to R: Levon Filian, Joyce Philibosian Stein, Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian and Rev. Joseph Matossian. Back row L to R: Rev. Gilbert Leonian, Rev. Joel Mikaelian, Rev. Nishan L. Bakalian, Rev. Megr ditch Karagoezian, Joseph Zeronian, Ed. D. and Rev. Dr. René Leonian.

Our Trip to Armenia

"It is most satisfying to make a difference!"

Doreen Bilezikian

How excited we were to arrive in Yerevan! It had been five years since our last visit, and we were curious to see the changes in Armenia.

My husband Chuck, our son Jeff, long-time friends Faith Cassabian Patriquin and her husband Jim, and I arrived to glorious, sunny day weather similar to a warm fall day in New England. Chuck, a Board member of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) for the past six years, was anxious to discuss with AMAA representatives projects that our family has funded, to review and visit sites of current projects, and to explore proposals for future projects. We were met by Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA, his lovely wife and partner, Liliana, and Harout Nercessian, AMAA's Representative in Armenia. Levon and Harout accompanied our group to Yerevan, Armavir, Gyumri, Vanatzor and Karabagh.

On our first day, we visited Armavir where we were greeted by Rev. Garoush Antonyan, Pastor of the Evangelical Church of Armenia in Armavir. We toured the church and an adjacent lot which is considered for expansion, and discovered delicious grapes growing wild. Following the feast of grapes, we were treated to a wonderful concert sung by the Shoghig Choir. The Church wants to expand its size and to build a cultural center.

In Vanatzor, we visited a medical/dental clinic sponsored by the AMAA in partnership with Hope for Armenia of France. Although small, it is able to serve the community. Not far from the clinic, we drove to a newly renovated bakery for which our family had provided the funds. It changed from a Third World bakery to a first class bakery. Bread is made in the back of the store front which is bright and colorful. The breads we tasted were delicious! They even make lahmejun (Armenian pizza).

From Vanatzor, we went to Gyumri where we toured the site where the new AMAA Center will be built. It was in Gyumri that we visited an orphanage for handicapped, pre-school and kindergarten age children which is affiliated with the Perkins School for the Blind. At the orphanage, we met two of the teachers that our family had sponsored. They were trained by accredited teachers at the Perkins School, located in Watertown, MA.

The next day, we toured the current campus and the new site of the Avedisian School, where we reviewed architectural plans with the engineers. A lively discussion ensued on the need for quality education from Kindergarten through University.

In Stepanakert, we met with the President of the Republic of Mountainous Karabagh, Bako Sahakyan. Mr. Filian informed him of the programs the Bilezikian Family Foundation support in Shushi. The President expressed a desire for the young people from America and elsewhere to spend more time in Karabagh as it would give the young people a greater appreciation for the region. Later that day, we met with Archbishop Barkev Martirosyan, Primate of the Artsakh Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Archbishop is an intelligent man with humor, who spoke English very well.

The highlight of our visit to Karabagh was a visit to the Kindergarten our family established in Shushi seven years ago. Currently the school has 67 students. A tour of the school indicated that the building was well maintained, and student supplies were plentiful. Last year, our family funded the conversion of a dirt lot, located next door to the Kindergarten, into a playground. It not only services the Kindergarten, but the surrounding community. The official opening of the playground was held the day we arrived. And what a celebration it was! News



Doreen Bilezikian receiving a bouquet of flowers and dancing at the Playground Ceremony.



Charles, Jeffrey and Doreen Bilezikian at the Bilezikian Playground site in Shushi.

reporters from the local TV stations interviewed Levon, Harout, the principal, the staff and Chuck and me. Disney characters appeared, games were held, and special treats were in abundance. A dance group, dressed in Armenian costumes, entertained us with music and dance. As the music played, all joined in dancing — the children, the head of school and staff. It was fun and very satisfying. The AMAA oversees and supports a Child Sponsorship Program. Our son Jeffrey and his wife Nancy sponsored a young girl five years ago when she was 12 years old. Back in Yerevan, we met a very pretty young lady one afternoon who hopes to study psychology at the University. Other children were present with their sponsored parents. Cookies and juice were served at the AMAA office.

Levon and Harout were wonderful hosts who represent the best of the AMAA. The tours, explanations and discussions are an education into a country and people who need support in every way. It is most satisfying to make a difference. I encourage you to contact the AMAA to find out how you can make a difference. □

Bilezikian Family Visits Armenia

Harout Nercessian

Charles (Chuck) and Doreen Bilezkian, along with their son, Jeffrey, and friends, Jim and Faith Patriquin, visited Armenia in October 2012. Chuck is a member of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Board of Directors and founder of the Bilezikian Family Foundation that supports various philanthropic projects in Armenia.

The Bilezkians traveled to Armenia to review the projects funded by the Bilezikian Family Foundation and to review existing AMAA mission programs. The Bilezikians were accompanied by AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian and his wife, Liliana, and AMAA Armenia Representative Harout Nercessian. They visited programs in Yerevan, Armavir, Gyumri, Vanadzor and Karabagh.

The visits started with a stopover at the AMAA Headquarters in Yerevan. The Bilezikians were introduced to the AMAA staff and the work that is carried on at the Center.

In Armavir, the guests were welcomed by Rev. Garoush Antonyan, Pastor of the Evangelical Church of Armenia in Armavir, and by members of the Church Board and the much loved Shoghik Choir, who entertained the guests with a concert. The Bilezikians were informed of the blessings enjoyed by the Church and the challenges that it faces. The guests had an opportunity to pick and savor delicious



Bilezikian family visiting with church members in Armavir, Armenia.

grapes growing in the backyard of the Church.

In Vanadzor, the Bilezkians visited the AMAA Center and the Medical/Dental Clinic operated by the AMAA in partnership with Hope for Armenia of France. The Vanadzor trip concluded with a visit to the bakery, which was funded by the Bilezikians.

On the following day, the group visited the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School and the construction site of the Avedisian School building. Here, Mr. Filian and members of the construction team updated the guests on the progress of the construction and answered their questions.

Visit with the President

On Sunday, October 21, the group headed to Stepanakert, Karabagh. Here they visited the President of the Republic of

Mountainous Karabagh, Bako Sahakyan. The delegation was headed by Levon Filian, Liliana Filian, Chuck and Doreen Bilezkian, Jeffrey Bilezkian, Harout Nercessian and Arsen Manassian, AMAA Representative in Karabagh. Mr. Filian introduced the Bilezikians to the President and informed him of the programs they support, especially in Shushi. Mr. Nercessian updated the President on AMAA's programs in Armenia and Karabagh, stressing the new emphasis on income generation and educational programs. The President expressed his deep appreciation for what the AMAA has done and is doing in Karabagh. He confirmed the need for job creation and income generating programs.

Following the meeting with the President, the delegation met with Archbishop Pargév Martirosyan, Primate of the Artsakh Diocese of the Armenian



Bilezikians visiting the Avedisian School construction site.



Avedisian School construction site, Yerevan, Armenia.

Apostolic Church. The Primate expressed his appreciation to the Bilezikians and to the AMAA for its humanitarian work in Karabagh.

The delegation then headed to the Bilezikian Kindergarten in Shushi. Mr. Bilezikian and the AMAA leadership discussed the valuable service of the Kindergarten to the local community and reviewed the challenges that it faces. Mrs. Hamestuhi, Principal of the Kindergarten, expressed her deep gratitude to the Bilezikians for their support.

Bilezikian Playground Opens in Shushi

One of the highlights of the trip was the opening of the Bilezikian Playground in Shushi, Karabagh. Over a hundred children were welcomed to the only playground in the town by Disney characters who

entertained them and gave them gifts. The children sang, danced and played with big smiles on their faces. Both the Mayor of Shushi and the regional Governor were present to express their gratitude for this beautifully constructed playground. It's a beautiful gift to the children of this historic, yet very poor city. The media gave extensive coverage of this event.

The AMAA invited the Avedisian School Board to a dinner to thank them for their hard work and introduced them to the Bilezikian family. The Bilezikians organized a "Last Super" dinner of appreciation. Present at the dinner were Dr. John Bilezikian, Dr. Caroline Aporian, Sam Chekijian, Nanor Ashodian and other guests.

During this visit, the Bilezikians took great interest in AMAA projects, especially the ones that they support. They asked critical questions, challenged assumptions, gave valuable advice and shared in the joy of positive

impact and success. Their active engagement enhanced the quality of the work and motivated us all who work in the field. Their visit was a great encouragement to us all. □



Charles Bilezikian discussing the Avedisian School construction progress.



Children playing at the newly opened Bilezikian Family Foundation Playground.



Dinner with Avedisian School Board.



Day Care Center in Nork, Yerevan, Armenia.



Visiting the Bilezikian Kindergarten in Shushi, Karabagh.



Visiting the statues of Mamig and Babig in Karabagh. Pictured L to R: Arsen Manassian, Levon Filian, Jeffrey Bilezikian and Harout Nercessian.



Orphaned children at Mangadoun (orphanage) in Gyumri, Armenia.



A highlight of the visit was a concert featuring Michel Legrand at the Aram Khachaturian Concert Hall in Yerevan, Armenia.



Chuck Bilezikian visiting the Bilezikian Kindergarten in Shushi, Karabagh.



Dancers at the official opening of the Bilezikian Family Foundation Playground.



Official opening of the Bilezikian Family Foundation Playground.

Avedisian School Update

Construction of The Avedisian School in Yerevan, Armenia is underway. The construction crew has begun work on the excavation and poured the foundation for the School. A target date for completion of the project is scheduled for September 2014.



Pastors' Prayer Retreat In Armenia

The Armenian Evangelical pastors of Armenia held their annual prayer retreat at the Camp Sheen-Shoghig in Hankavan, Armenia from September 4-7. The event was sponsored by the Armenian Missionary Association of Armenia. More than 40 pastors attended the retreat with great excitement and anticipation of spiritual blessings.

The worship services were led by pastor/musician Jivan of Yeghvard from Armenia. The sermons and discussions were led by Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian, the Senior Pastor of the Evangelical Church of Armenia and AMAA Field Director.

The theme for the retreat was "Be Holy." As Christians, after we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, we start a life time process of sanctification. Reading and hearing, studying and meditating, practicing and obeying the Word of God on one hand and the life circumstances with its joys and sadness, successes and failures, ups and downs; and on the other hand we are being used by the Holy Spirit to shape our testimony to be a blessing to many IF we totally commit ourselves to God.

The teaching was taken from the I Kings 1-11, the life of King Solomon; his enthronement, his rise and fall. After studying this part of the Scripture, we found that there are three major reasons why people fall, even famous pastors, CEOs and CFOs of big companies. These three sins – money, sex and selfish ambitions – destroy the person, their families, their communities and even nations. It was challenging to understand that even Solomon, about whom the Word of God says was the wisest man on earth of all times, was not free of temptations. He committed all three sins.

After each seminar/message, the pastors were invited to form small group



Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian leading the pastors at a worship service.

discussions and spend time in prayer. This was a time for self-examination, confession, forgiveness and renewal of their relationships and service to God.

Discussion time after the sessions, individual prayer time and prayers in small groups were scheduled throughout the retreat. The climax of the retreat was a worship service with Holy Communion.

One of the greatest blessings that the pastors enjoyed was the prayer time after the evening worship services each day.

The worship started at 8:00 pm and ended around 9:30, but the pastors continued praying with Rev. Melkonian individually until 2:00 am, confessing their sins with tears and with passion. Let's pray that they may stay faithful to the Lord and continue their sanctification process with the Lord.

Although each pastor participated in the registration fee, the AMAA also contributed financially. We are thankful to God and to the leaders of the AMAA. □



Over 6,500 Children and Teens in Armenia and Karabagh Participate in AMAA's 23rd Annual Summer Camps and DVBS

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), in cooperation with the Evangelical Church of Armenia, has been organizing summer camps and Daily Vacation Bible Schools (DVBS) for children in Armenia and Karabagh since 1990. Due to the continued severe economic conditions in Armenia, most children cannot afford the fun, rest and recreation that summer camps provide. Instead, they spend their summer holidays in the streets. The AMAA camping missions are designed to share the love of Jesus with children and youth in very practical ways. Every summer, thousands of children attend AMAA Camps and Day Camps to play, learn, enhance their talents, socialize, meet new friends, and learn about their Armenian national culture and heritage. At the camps they are nourished in a Christian atmosphere of tender loving care.

During the summer of 2012, AMAA organized two overnight camps – one at Camp Sheen Shoghig in Hankavan, Armenia and the second at Camp Bedrosian in Shushi, Karabagh – where about 1,500 children and teenagers participated. In addition, 57 day camps and DVBS's were held in 43 towns and villages for about 5,000 children and teenagers.

The children received various clothing items and health necessities, such as T-shirts, raincoats, shoes, tooth paste, tooth brushes and shampoo. Changes in the children were felt within



Day Camp/DVBS in Vardenis, Armenia.

a few days of their arrival at camp. They started to love and co-operate with those they initially disliked and forgave those that have hurt them. When they returned to their homes, the parents were surprised to see how their children's attitude and lives were changed. They were more obedient, cooperative, forgiving and kind.



Camp Sheen Shoghig in Hankavan, Armenia.



Prayer time in Camp Sheen Shoghig.



Camp Sheen Shoghig in Hankavan, Armenia.



Day Camp/DVBS in Bureghavan, Armenia.



Day Camp/DVBS in Dilijan, Armenia.

The AMAA spends over \$100,000 annually to organize summer camps in Armenia and Karabagh, as well as in other countries, such as Bulgaria, Lebanon, Syria and the United States. Besides the funds to operate these camps on a daily basis, the camp sites need constant maintenance and renovation to keep the facilities safe and up to date. Those who wish to support these camps and be part of these vital programs, can contact the AMAA at 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652 or by calling at 201-265-2607 or e-mailing amaa@amaa.org.

Camp ministries continue to be one of the most effective methods by which we bring our children to God. □



Day Camp/DVBS in Abovyan, Armenia.



Camp Bedrosian in Shushi, Karabagh.



Camp Bedrosian, Shushi, Karabagh.

Boston Children Helping Children Luncheon Raises Over \$55,000 for Child Care Programs

The 17th Annual Boston Children Helping Children Luncheon was held October 25 at the Wellesley Country Club in Wellesley, MA. The event was an overwhelming success, raising over \$55,000. The generosity of the attendees, despite challenging economic times, was an inspiration, and all proceeds were donated to the AMAA Orphan and Child Care Programs in Armenia and Karabagh. C

Following a short film documenting Child Care programs in Armenia presented by AMAA Director of Development and Marketing Phyllis Dohanian, guests were treated to a performance

by the exceptionally talented young oboist Andrew Eurdolian. Channel 5 Weatherman Mike Wankum served as the Auctioneer auctioning off vacation and dinner packages, sports and concert tickets, designer handbags, jewelry, artwork and more. A Silent Auction was held and three lucky guests won Tiffany bracelets in the raffle.

The Boston Orphan and Child Care Committee is most grateful to all donors and guests for their participation in this year's event. To participate or donate to future Boston events, please contact Michele Simourian at 508-785-0569. □



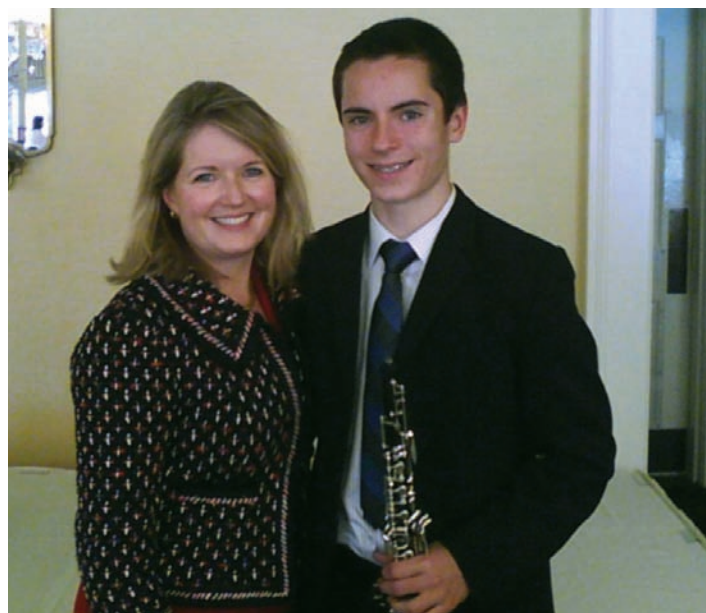
Committee member Nancy Eskandarian displays auction artwork for guests.



Committee members Simone Dodge and Susan Covo, who models a fur stole during the auction.



Boston Channel 5 weathercaster Mike Wankum keeps the crowd smiling.



Oboist Andrew Eurdolian with proud mom, Carolyn Eurdolian.

NJ Orphan and Child Care Committee Raises Funds for Medical Fund

“Accessorize the Season” was the theme of the third annual

Christmas Brunch sponsored by the New Jersey Orphan and Child Care Committee. Held at Neiman Marcus in Paramus, NJ on November 29, the event was chaired by Anita Buchakjian and Jane Charshafian. Over \$6,500 was raised to help AMAA sponsored children in Armenia when special medical needs arise.

Over 50 guests enjoyed brunch and a special presentation by the Neiman Marcus staff on accessorizing your wardrobe for the holiday season. The Silent Auction was also held and featured gift cards, a watch, restaurant gift certificates, Armenian cognac, a spa package, Disney World passes, lottery tickets, truffle basket, tennis court time, and a beautiful scarf donated by Neiman Marcus.

Levon Filian, Armenian Missionary Association of America Executive Director, opened the program and thanked everyone for supporting this worthwhile event. He introduced special guest, Baroness Caroline Cox, Founder and CEO of the Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust, who spoke on her campaign for humanitarian causes, and the inspiration she has drawn from the courage of the Armenian children she has encountered in Karabagh and Armenia. She delighted the guests with accounts of her travels and the important work that she does to provide lasting change through aid and advocacy.

Anita Buchakjian thanked the guests for coming and MJ Hekemian, Chair of the NJ Orphan and Child Care Committee, highlighted several cases of children in Armenia who have been helped with their medical needs by our fundraising efforts this past year.



L to R: AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian, Baroness Caroline Cox, MJ Hekemian and Anita Buchakjian

The AMAA wishes to thank Neiman Marcus for hosting the Brunch and for Anita Buchakjian for underwriting this wonderful event and MJ Hekemian and her daughter, Lisa Hekemian Mongelli, for matching the donation. □



Seated L to R: A guest, Lucienne Aynilian, Sonia Krouchian and Janet Reshdouni. Standing L to R: Shoghag Hovanessian and Seta Nalbandian



Seated L to R: Diane Kekhman, Bianca Michelis and Alina Gamburg. Standing L to R: Suzanne Hekemian and Lisa Hekemian Mongelli



Pastor Haig Runs for Syria Relief

Pastoral Intern Haig Kherlopian of the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church in Havertown, PA ran in the Philadelphia Marathon in November and chose to sponsor Syria relief. His father is originally from Homs, Syria so it was the logical choice of charities for Pastor Haig.

"I contacted the AMAA and arranged for all of the donations to go directly to Syria to help keep Armenian schools operational," said Pastor Haig. "I am pleased to announce that over \$2,400 has been raised from my participation to date."

"My church community was my biggest support group," said Pastor Haig. "They supported me financially and with encouragement and prayers. The great thing about this fundraiser was that the money raised came from a lot of small contributions, from Armenians and non-Armenians. Many people are unsure of what is happening in the Middle East so it was good to remind them of what is still happening there."

Pastor Haig, who ran a couple of half marathons while in the seminary, serves as the Youth Director at the Church. "Whatever energy I had after the race was used to focus on the Youth Group in the evening. We are studying 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 so it was on my mind the last five miles of the race and it motivated me to finish!" □



Belmont Church Hosts Concert for Syria

The First Armenian Church of Belmont, MA hosted a concert to help support Armenians who are suffering in Aleppo on October 25. Alex and Sammy Andonian initiated the concert because they wanted to do something to help.

Not only did they amaze and bless the audience with a mix of classical music and songs by Armenian composers, they also inspired the audience to donate \$1,800 to the AMAA's Armenian Syrian Relief Fund. A special thank you to Alex and Sammy and to Jennifer, who accompanied them on the piano. □



Rev. Joseph Matossian Honored at ANCA-WR Banquet

Rev. Joseph Matossian, Minister to the AEUNA, was honored by the Armenian National Committee of America- Western Region on October 28 at its annual banquet at the Beverly Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA. Rev. Matossian was honored with the Khrimian Hayrig Award, which is given by the ANCA-WR to clerical figures who have devoted their lives to the Armenian nation, in the spirit of the award's inimitable namesake.

"The Khrimian Hayrig Award represents an acknowledgement of exemplary service and devotion to the Armenian people as a religious leader. Rev. Matossian personifies this special type of service and devotion and has done so throughout his life," said ANCA-WR Co-Chair Nora Hovsepian. "We are happy to be honoring such a deserving individual with this award."

Rev. Matossian has served God and the Armenian community for over four decades. He was the Senior Pastor of the Armenian Brotherhood Bible Church in Pasadena, CA for over 20 years. From 1994-2004 he served as the Senior Pastor of the Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church in Downey, CA. Since 2004, he has served as Minister to the Union of the



Rev. Matossian holds his award with ANCA-WR Board members Zareh Sinanyan and Pattyl Aposhian-Kasparian.

Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA).

"To be recognized for my service is an honor for which I am grateful to the ANCA-WR," said Rev. Matossian. "Through our collective, steadfast pursuit of a better and just life for our community, I have no doubt that we will be successful."

The AMAA Executive Director, staff and the Board of Directors congratulates Rev. Matossian for being the recipient of this worthy award. □

AMAA Receives \$300,000 Grant From the John Mirak Foundation

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) was recently named recipient of a grant of \$300,000 from the John Mirak Foundation of Arlington, MA. This contribution will be used to provide support for the construction of the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School in Malatia-Sepastia, Yerevan, Armenia. In particular, this grant will provide the school LEED certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), meaning that it will be constructed and operated with leading edge technology and materials that maximize sustainable energy use, efficiency and water conservation.

"We are truly blessed to receive this grant from the John Mirak Foundation," said Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA. "The Mirak Foundation's sponsorship of the first LEED-certified building in Armenia is truly unique. LEED-certification of the School demonstrates the commitment of both the Mirak Foundation and the AMAA to a future in Armenia where the buildings are designed to be environmentally sustainable, earthquake resistant and less costly to operate."

Founded in 1972 by Genocide survivor John Mirak, the John Mirak Foundation is a private family foundation that has generously supported charitable and educational institutions in



L to R: Phyllis Dohanian, Director of AMAA Development and Marketing; Jeanmarie Papelian, Co-Chair of AMAA Development Committee; Edward Avedisian, AMAA Board member and Avedisian School Benefactor; Bob Mirak and Jill Mirak Kew of the Mirak Foundation.

Arlington, MA and the global Armenian community including The Armenian Cultural Foundation, The Armenia Tree Project, The Armenian Heritage Park and many others. The Foundation has recently renewed its commitment to preserving Armenia by funding organizations that focus on issues surrounding environmental sustainability, reforestation and education at all levels.

The AMAA thanks the Mirak Foundation for this generous donation. □

Jersey Strong: AMAA Helps With Superstorm Sandy Cleanup

On December 1, AMAA volunteers and staff met in Sea Bright, NJ to help people affected by "Superstorm Sandy" along the Jersey Shore. A total of seven volunteers from North Jersey participated in the cleanup efforts. Three members of the group were assigned cleanup assistance with a local business. The remaining members helped dig out the walkway to a house which had a significant amount of sand placed in its path from the ocean. In addition to the cleanup, the AMAA continued relief efforts by distributing gift cards.

Volunteers included Peyton Kapegian, Ernest Walter, Badveli Haig Kherlopian, Michael Knudson and Armen Ewing. AMAA staff included David Aynejian, Director of Finance, and Armen Beylerian, Field and Operations Director.

The AMAA is still accepting donations and is considering future cleanup efforts. If you are interested in donating or volunteering, please call the AMAA at 201.265.2607 or e-mail us at amaa@amaa.org. □



AMAA Field/Operations Director Visits the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago

Armen Beylerian visited the Armenian Evangelical Church in Chicago on October 21. The attendance at the Sunday service was very good. The service included a PowerPoint presentation about the activities of the AMAA around the world. The emphasis was on the projects in Armenia such as the Avedisian School construction and relief efforts in Syria. The congregation was very interested in these and other sponsorship programs for children in Armenia. Many congregation members provided prayer support and donations for these causes. The fellowship hour following the service was filled with good questions and conversation. Armen felt very much at home at the Chicago Armenian Evangelical Church.





At the United Nations: AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian attended a conference at the United Nations this fall to hear Armenia's Foreign Minister address the United Nations. **L to R:** Levon Filian, Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian, Ambassador Garen Nazarian and Van Krikorian of Armenian Assembly of America.



At the United Nations: Pictured are His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan - Prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of the Eastern United States, and Levon Filian at the United Nations Conference in New York.



In New York City: AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian and Field/Operations Director Armen Beylerian recently met with representatives of the Karageozian Foundation in New York City. **Pictured above clockwise from left:** Marian Bandazian, Levon Filian, His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan - Prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of the Eastern United States, Bishop Anoushavan Tanielian, a friend, Ohanian child, Mrs. Jimmy Ohanian, Serop Ohanian - Director of Karageozian Center in Lebanon; Armen Beylerian and Walter Bandazian, Ph.D. - Executive Director of the Karageozian Foundation.

AMAA Visitor from Chicago!



Fred Simonian, former AMAA Board member and active member of many AMAA Committees, paid a visit to the AMAA Paramus, NJ Headquarters in the fall. **Pictured L to R are:** Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director; Nancy Rivera, AMAA Executive Assistant; Fred, Armen Beylerian, AMAA Field and Operations Director; and Fred's son, Dr. Philip Simonian.

Hampic Djabourian CDs and DVD Available

Upon popular demand, we have made arrangements to provide CDs and DVDs of Hampic Djabourian whose performance at our Annual Dinner Concert was appreciated by all those who attended.

The following CDs are available for \$12.50 each plus shipping:

Armenian Medieval & Contemporary Music by Hampic Djabourian, Solo Clarinet & String Quintet, includes music by Komitas, Ruben Altunyan, Alexander Spendiarian and Aram Khachaturyan.

Komidas Doudoug Melodies by Hampic Djabourian & the Ensemble. The Ensemble of dudek players was created in 1999 under the leadership of Armen Stepanian, who teaches at the Yerevan Komitas Conservatory. The CD includes 13 selections including Kroung and Le, Le, Yaman.

The DVD is available for \$16.50 each plus shipping:

The National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia *My Journey Home* featuring Hampic Djabourian (Clarinet & Duduk) and Ruben Asadryan, Conductor. This set includes 2 CDs and 1 DVD and was recorded live at Gomidas Chamber Music Hall in 2010.

For more information on or to purchase the CDs and DVD, please go on the AMAA website at www.amaa.org or call the AMAA at 201-265-2607.



Armenia Fund Dinner Honors Armenia Foreign Minister

The Armenia Fund Appreciation Dinner, honoring H. E. Edward Nalbandian, Armenia's Foreign Minister, and major donors for Armenia was held September 28 at the Petrossian Restaurant in New York City. The Dinner was attended by Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA, and other AMAA representatives. □



Edward Avedisian, AMAA Board member (center) seated with Armenia Fund guests including AGBU President Berge Setrakian, Nana Nazarian, Armenia's Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian, Attorney Mark Geragos, and Armenia Assembly Chairman Hirair Hovnanian.



L to R: Liliana Filian, Levon Filian, Andreas Roubian, Priya Katra, Jean-Marie Atamian and Lori Atamian



L to R: His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, Prelate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of North America, Hagop Kouyoudjian, Garen Nazarian, Armenia's Representative to the United Nations, and guests.



L to R: Dr. Raffi Hovanessian, The Honorable Tatoul Markarian, Ambassador to the United States, Anna Markarian and Shoghag Hovanessian

Year-End Giving By Credit Card Donations Accepted Until December 26

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) welcomes you to make your year-end donation by using your credit card. Please note that all such gifts must be made by December 26, 2012 to qualify for a 2012 tax deduction. For more information, please call the AMAA at 201-265-2607 for additional information.

The Armenian Missionary
Association of America
Invites you

To Bring Christmas Joy
To our children in
Armenia
& Karabagh

By Sponsoring
Christmas Joy Packages
\$10 Per Package



The Christmas Joy Packages will help bring joy and celebration to thousands of needy children in Armenia and Karabagh during the upcoming holidays. The children look forward to receiving these packages at their annual Christmas programs. Last year, the AMAA and the Evangelical Church of Armenia organized 55 Christmas programs in 42 towns and villages throughout Armenia and Karabagh for more than 10,000 children and their families.

On behalf of our children, thank you for your
continued support!

*"As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren,
you did it to me." Matthew 25:40*



Yes, I would like to provide a blessed Christmas season for
orphans and needy children.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ for _____
children's Christmas Joy Packages (\$10 per package).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. _____ E-mail: _____

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to AMAA for Christmas Joy
Packages and mail to AMAA, 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652. To
make a contribution with a credit/debit card, please visit AMAA's website at
amaa.org or call AMAA at 201-265-2607.



Աղօթք Իմ Ծննդավայր Հայրենիքիս՝ Սուրիոյ Համար

Վեր. Յովհաննէս Սարմազեան*

Ամենագոր Տէրը՝ մեր երկնաւոր Հայր Աստուած, Գանատայի այս հեռաւոր անկիւնին մէջ, այս ուշ գիշերին, սենեակիս մէջ առանձին, ես ծնկաչոք եւ պաղատագին, կ'աղօթեմ իմ չքնաղ ծննդավայր հայրենիքիս՝ Սուրիոյ համար: Ժամանաւ մը ի վեր, Սուրիա՝ իմ սիրելի եւ գեղեցիկ ծննդավայր հայրենիքս, տագնապի եւ ցաւի մէջ է, ո՛վ Աստուած, ու իմ սիրտը կը տուայտի ու կը մղկտայ ամէն օր, երբ հեռատեսիլի լուրերէն կը լսեմ ցաւալի արիւնահեղութեանց մասին ու կը տեսնեմ ահաւոր հրդեհներէն բարձրացող սեւ ամպերու պէս ծուխեր, որոնք կ'ապականեն իմ չքնաղ ծննդավայր հայրենիքիս այնքա՛ն գեղեցիկ եւ լազուարթ երկինքը:

Սուրիա, իմ ծննդավայր հայրենիք, ուր ալ գտնուիմ, որքա՛ն ալ հեռու ըլլամ քեզմէ, հոգեկան կապերս միշտ վառ կը մնան քեզի հանդէպ: Ես չեմ կրնար անտարբեր մնալ քու ցաւին եւ վիշտին հանդէպ, որոնք այնքան դառնօրէն կ'արիւնին այս օրերուն: Մայրս գիտէ ծնած է քու ասպնջական հողիդ վրայ: Ես հասակ առած եմ քու հողէդ, ջինջ ջուրէդ եւ մաքուր օդէդ սնուցանուելով: Ես ինչպէ՞ս մոռնամ իմ այն զուարթ եւ առողջ մանկութիւնս, զոր անցուցած եմ քեզմէ կոչուած այն գեղեցիկ եւ անսման բնութեան ծոցին մէջ, ուր մեր երկինքի լազուարթը կ'իջներ հորիզոնէն վար, ու կը խառնուէր Միջերկրականի կապոյտ եւ բիւրեղ ջուրերուն՝ ստեղծելով այն գեղեցիկ եւ անսման բնակարը, որուն երբեք չեմ հանդիպած ոչ մէկ այլ տեղ աշխարհի վրայ:

Սուրիա, իմ ծննդավայր հայրենիք, ես ինչպէ՞ս մոռնամ հօրս տարագրութեան այն տխուր պատմութիւնը, երբ թուրք «ճանտարման» վրան կրակելով զայն մէկդի դրած էր՝ մեռած կարծելով, սակայն, գթասիրտ սուրիացի արաբ գիւղացին զայն տեսնելով ճամբուն վրայ ինկած, վիրաւոր, բարի սամարացիին պէս, վերցուցած էր, իր ջորիին վրայ դնելով տարած էր հիւանդանոց, եւ այդպէս հայրս ազատած էր ստոյգ մահէն:

Ես ինչպէ՞ս մոռնամ մօրս որբութեան պատմութիւնը, երբ թուրք Տէր Զօրի անապատին մէջ անոր ծնողները սպանդի ենթարկած էր, պետեւի արաբ կին մը գտած էր զինք մեռելներու դիակներուն քով, անոր լացին ձայնը լսելով, գթալով առած եւ տուն տարած էր զայն, եւ մօր մը պէս հոգ տարած էր անոր, մինչեւ որբահաւաքի այն օրը:

Այո՛, ես ինչպէ՞ս մոռնամ իմ ազգակիցներու այն տխուր եւ սրտաճմլիկ պատմութիւնը, երբ

թուրքը անգթօրէն զարկաւ մեզի, մեր դարաւոր պապենական տուններէն եւ հողերէն դուրս դնելով ցեղասպանութեան ենթարկեց, վերապրող ու վիրաւոր, եւ վտարանդի իմ հայ ազգակիցներուս առջեւ, դուք՝ արաբ ազնիւ եւ ասպնջական ժողովուրդ, դուք «եա հարամ» ըսելով, ձեր երկրին եւ սրտերուն դռները շատ լայն բացիք թշուառութեան մատնուած մեր տարագիր ժողովուրդին առջեւ, կիսելով ձեր հացն ու ջուրը մեզի հետ: Ոչ միայն այդքան, այլ անելին, մանաւանդ «Երազային Հալէպի» մէջ, մեր տարագիր ժողովուրդը շուտով կրցաւ իր պանդխտութեան ցուպը մէկդի դնելով, ինք զինք կրցաւ իր տան մէջ ըլլալու պէս զգալ, հող ունեցանք, տուն, եկեղեցի եւ դպրոց կառուցանեցինք: Ծուտով իրաւունք եւ ազատութիւն տուիք պանդուխտ մեր ժողովուրդին հաւասարե հաւասար՝ սուրիական քաղաքացի ըլլալու, մոռնալով մեր տարագրութեան վիշտն ու ցաւը:

Սուրիա, իմ ծննդավայր հայրենիք, քու սրբազան հողերդ ու սահմաններդ պաշտպանելու համար ես զինուորագրուելով, հպարտութեամբ բանակիդ մաս կազմած եմ: Ես ինչպէ՞ս մոռնամ քեզ, երբ իմ հօրս եւ իմ մօրս աճիւնները տակաւին հոն՝ հեռուն, քու հիւսիսը, Միջերկրականի կապոյտ ջուրերուն նայող «Սիդտրան» կոչուած լեռան ստորոտը կը հանգչին:

Ո՛չ, չեմ ուզեր, ո՛վ Տէր: Ես այս գիշեր թախանձագին կ'աղօթեմ, օտարոտի իրենց արիւնոտ մոյկերով առաթուր ընելով սրբապղծէն Սուրիոյ իմ ծննդավայր հայրենիքիս հողերը եւ մթագնէն անոր կապոյտ երկինքը: Ո՛չ չեմ ուզեր, ո՛վ Աստուած:

Սուրիա, իմ սիրելի ծննդավայր հայրենիք, Գանատայի այս հեռաւոր անկիւնին մէջ, այս ուշ գիշերին, գետին ինկած՝ ծնկաչոք եւ պաղատագին կը շարունակեմ աղօթել քեզի համար, որ շուտով խաբանուին ու վերջ գտնեն քեզ եղբայրասպան կռիւներու մէջ ձգող, մամոնային ամէն տեսակի դաւադրութիւնները: Ո՛չ Հիւսիսի ժանտ հովերը, եւ ոչ ալ Արեւմուտքի փոթորիկները չկարենան հասնիլ քեզի եւ սեւ ամպերով մթագնէն պայծառ երկինքը: Կ'աղօթեմ, որ ամենակալ եւ հրաշագործ Աստուած իր արդարութիւնը, ազատութիւնն ու խաղաղութիւնը երկինքէն տեղացող մանանայի պէս մաղէ, քու հողերուդ



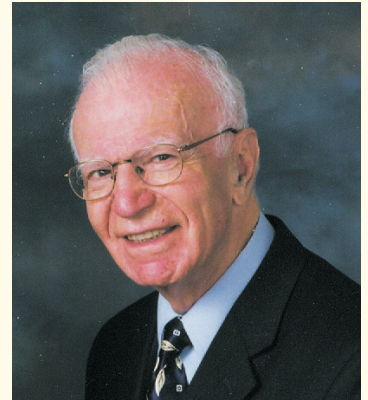
Շարունակութիւնը յաջորդ էջին վրայ...

Սրտագին Կոչ Սուրիահայրության Օգելու Համար

«Բայց բարիք գործելէ չձանձրանանք, որովհետեւ յարմար ժամանակին պիտի հնձենք՝ եթէ չթուլնանք» (Գաղատացիս 6. 9)

Սիրելի՛ Ազգակիցներ,

Հարկ չենք տեսներ հոս տեղեկութիւններ տալ մեր շատերուն երկրորդ հայրենիքը դարձած Սուրիոյ կացութեան մասին: Սակայն, կասկած չկայ որ մեր ազգակիցները նեղ կացութեան մէջ կը գտնուին այժմ, ու կը կարօտին մեր հոգեւոր, բարոյական, ու տնտեսական օգնութեան եւ քաջալերութեան: Արդարեւ, հայրենիքէն ետք առաջին գիծի վրայ կուգայ Սուրիան ուր ապաստանեցանք ազգակործան ջարդերէ ետք ու շինեցինք տուն, եկեղեցի, դպրոց, ու վայելեցինք այդ երկրին մեզի ընձեռած բոլոր բարիքները: Մեզմէ շատեր այդ երկրին մէջ տիրացան նախնական ու երկրորդական ուսումի: Պէտք է աւելցնել որ մեր նախորդ սերունդին կրթական եւ հոգեւոր մշակները մեծամասամբ իրենց ուսումը ստացած են Հալէպի մեր կրթական հաստատութիւններուն մէջ, ու մեր եկեղեցիները մատակարարած են Հայ գաղթական ժողովուրդին անհրաժեշտ կրթական ու հոգեւոր սնունդ եւ առաջնորդութիւն:



Ահա այս պատմական քաղաքն ու Հայ գաղութը մատնուած են նեղ կացութեան: Մեր եկեղեցական, կրթական ու մշակութային հաստատութիւնները պէտք ունին մեր անմիջական օգնութեան: Մեզի հասած տեղեկութիւններու համաձայն, կան Հայ բազմաթիւ ընտանիքներ որոնք հիւսկական նեղ կացութեան մէջ կը գտնուին: Շատեր ստիպողաբար լքած են տուն-տեղ, ու ապահովութեան համար ուրիշ վայրեր եւ բնակարաններ փոխադրուած են:

Պատմականօրէն, Ամերիկահայ գաղութը միշտ օգնութեան հասած է Հայ գաղթականներուն ու սովահարներուն: Առատութեան այս երկրին մէջ մենք՝ յարաբերաբար՝ լաւ կեանք կը վարենք ամէն տեսակէտով: Անշուշտ թէ երախ տապարտ ըլլալու ենք Աստուծոյ մեր վայելած բարիքներուն համար: Սակայն, առ Աստուած երախտագիտութիւն յայտնելու ամենէն աստուածահաճոյ կերպը աղքատներու ու նեղութեան մէջ գտնուողներու անմիջական ու անսակարկ օգնութեան հասնիլ է, յատկապէս մեր ազգակիցներուն ու հաւատքի ընտանիքներուն:

Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան անունով կոչ կ'ուղղենք մեր բոլոր ազգակիցներուն, եկեղեցիներուն եւ հաստատութիւններուն որ գործակցին մեզի՝ մեր այս շտապ օգնութեան մեծ եւ աստուածահաճոյ ծրագիրին գործադրութեան մէջ:

Ձերդ Աղօթարար
Վեր. Պարգեւ Ն. Տարագճեան

Վեր. Սարմազեան... շարունակուած նախորդ էջէն...

ամբողջ տարածքին վրայ, եւ հին օրերու օրհնութիւնները դարձեալ գարնան անձրեւի պէս տեղան ամէն տեղ: Սուրիա, տեսիլքի եւ Աստուածաշնչական երկիր, Դամասկոսի ճամբայ, ուղիղ փողոց, հոգեպէս ես տակաւին ինքզինքս կապուած կը զգամ քեզի: Իմ մանկութեան եւ պատանեկութեան երազներուս ներշնչման աշխարհը դուռն եղած ես:

Իմ սիրտս կ'արիւնի ամէն անգամ երբ կը տեսնեմ քու զաւակներուդ թափուող անմեղ արիւնը:

Ամենակարող Տէ՛ր, հրաշագործ Աստուած, պաղատագին կ'աղերսեմ, որ քու սիրովդ եւ իմաստութեամբդ լեցնես հոգիներն ու միտքերը Սուրիոյ իմ ծննդավայր հայրենիքի առաջնորդներուն եւ

ղեկավարներուն, որպէսզի եղբայրասպան կռիւները վերջ գտնեն այնտեղ, եւ քու Աստուծային արդարութիւնդ եւ խաղաղութիւնդ հաստատուի եւ տարածուի Սուրիա հայրենիքի ամբողջ տարածքին վրայ:

Այո՛, Տէ՛ր, հրաշագործ Աստուած, թախանձագին կ'աղօթեմ Սուրիոյ իմ ծննդավայր հայրենիքիս խաղաղութեան եւ փրկութեան համար:

Լսէ՛, Տէ՛ր, անարժանիս աղօթքը եւ օգնութեան հասիր:

Ամէն... Ամէն... եւ Ամէն...: ☐

*Վեր. Յովհաննէս Սարմազեան Հովիւն է Գէյմպրիքի (Օնթէրիօ, Գաւատա) Հայ Աւետարանական եկեղեցիին:

Reverend Bernard A. Guekguezian

Badveli Bernard A. Guekguezian fulfilled his purpose in life and entered into eternal joy on September 22, 2012. Badveli completed over 55 years of pastoral service and leadership.

He began his internship ministry in Anjar, Lebanon as an apprentice shepherd (Assistant Pastor). From there he went to Alexandria Egypt in 1957. By the grace of God, Bernard was called as Pastor of the Armenian Congregational Church of the Martyrs' in Worcester, MA. The 1960s began with a great change for the family. From walking through the village, town or city to visit his people, Bernard got into a black Rambler American and drove throughout Worcester and its vicinity to get to know and love God's people in his charge. In 1967, Badveli Bernard was called to serve the Armenian Presbyterian Church of West New York in Hudson County, NJ. Badveli shepherded this congregation from this densely populated urban center to the bucolic suburban setting in Paramus, NJ with a short stop in Hackensack, NJ, both in Bergen County.



As Badveli visited his people, he became convinced that the future of this potentially thriving congregation was in Bergen County. Even as many Armenians immigrated to the United States through Hudson County from Lebanon as a result of conflict there, the new home of the Armenian Presbyterian Church was well situated to welcome and help settle new brothers and sisters in Christ. And lo, it was so. After twelve joyous and productive years, Badveli was called to serve and shepherd the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, CA. From 1978 to 2000, Badveli served tirelessly and joyfully. The congregation was rejuvenated time and again by Badveli's and the people's welcome to newcomers from the Middle East and Armenia.

Upon his retirement, he accepted God's call to serve as Interim Pastor of the First Armenian Church of Belmont, MA. For three years he loved and served fully and faithfully. His final years of ministry were with his son as they served together at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno, CA for the past eight years.

Badveli's ministry and life were marked by joyful and humble service, bold vision, community building, welcoming with exceptional hospitality any in need, especially the newcomer, all in the name of Jesus Christ. He was relentless in the proclamation of the Gospel in deed and in word, in that order.

Badveli Bernard is survived by his wife and partner in ministry, Knar, and his two sons, Rev. Ara Guekguezian, Pastor of the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno, CA and a member of the AMAA Board of Directors, and his wife, Evelina, and Asbed "Bernie" Guekguezian and his wife Amy, and five grandchildren.

The family requests that gifts in memory of Rev. Guekguezian be made to the Armenian Missionary Association of America in care of the Bernard Guekguezian Endowment for Church Development Fund.

My Family of Three Perish In Ocean


by Joyce Abdulian

The Pacific Ocean in Humboldt County, California claimed the lives of my brother Roy Kuljian's youngest son, Howard, his wife Mary, and their 16 year-old son Gregory, affectionately known as Geddie. Daughter Olivia, age 18, is the sole survivor. It is noteworthy that Howard was the grandnephew of the late Levon T. Levonian of the Ousoumnaseratz School of Aleppo.

Howard Gregory Kuljian is survived by his mother, Iris, brother Daniel, sisters Lynette Johnson, Rachel Ikola and their spouses and numerous relatives. He was born July 13, 1958 in Hampton, Virginia. He was a Fire Ecologist. **Mary Elena Scott** was born in Peoria, Illinois. She was the daughter of James Scott and Ruth Krenn Scott (both deceased). She had two brothers, Michael Scott (deceased) and David Scott, and a sister Theresa Jenkins. Mary is survived by their spouses and numerous relatives. Mary was a registered nurse. **Gregory (Geddie) James Kuljian** was born June 5, 1996 in Arcata, California. He had a deep interest in the study of aeronautical engineering. At school he was involved with cross country, track, sailing, and art classes.

Olivia Kuljian is a freshman at the College of the Redwoods. She is an accomplished artist and track athlete. Olivia was eyewitness to the tragic accident and gave her first-hand account to the Office of the Humboldt County Coroner's office, excerpted below:

On November 24, 2012, the family dog, retrieving a stick from shallow, mid-calf water, was swept into the water by an invisible undertow. Gregory made an attempt to save the dog...but the hidden strength of the water pulled Gregory into the water. Howard attempted to swim to his son... but the fast current and rough waves were too overpowering. Mary made an attempt to rescue (Gregory)...from the shallow water.....the unseen strength of the water pulled Mary into the water, also. Soon, Olivia saw an opportunity to rescue Mary in shallow water, but the pull of the water was so strong, a bystander had to pull Olivia to safety. Resuscitation efforts proved useless on Mary and Howard. Gregory is still missing.

The Olivia Kuljian Fund has been established at Wells Fargo Bank. Donations may be made at any Wells Fargo Branch or Wells Fargo customers may make a donation transfer at www.wellsfargo.com. Account #1136034673. Checks may be made out to *Olivia Kuljian* Fund and mailed to: Olivia Kuljian Fund, Account #1136034673 - P.O. Box 4030 - Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274. Online secure donations may be made via PayPal: OliviaKuljianFund@gmail.com 



L to R: Gregory (Geddie), Howard, Mary and Olivia

M. John Demirjian

M. John Demirjian of Quogue, NY passed away on August 22 in Riverhead, NY. He was 79.



John was born in Evanston, IL. His parents, Puzant and Nevare Demirjian, were immigrants whose families had escaped the Armenian Genocide. A graduate of Wheaton College, John shifted his professional focus from studying medicine to finance and he joined the investment bank of L.F. Rothschild & Co. By 1975 he became the Director of International Operations, establishing important relationships with many European, Middle Eastern and Japanese financial organizations and agencies. In 1989 he joined Bishop Rosen & Co., where he served as a financial advisor until his retirement in 2005.

He was an avid golfer and long-time member of the New York Athletic Club. An active member of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, he established a scholarship which is awarded to an outstanding seminary student each year.

He is survived by his second wife, Nancy Mullan-Demirjian and three children, Andrea, Gregory and Alexis. A funeral service was held on August 25 at the Church of Atonement in Quogue. □

Edward Derian

Edward Derian passed away peacefully on October 7 in Commerce Township, MI. He was 90.

He was born in Detroit, MI to Arakel and Pegouri Hintlian DerBoghossian. Edward served in the United States Army during World War II and retired from Sears after a successful career in sales. His retirement included numerous hours of volunteer service at the Henry Ford Hospital as well as playing golf and tavloo and spending time with his family and many friends. His love of life and wonderful sense of humor brought joy to all who knew him.

Edward is survived by his wife of 64 years, Mary, and his children, Richard (Jane), Janice (Daniel Toth), and Carl (Mary) and his eleven grandchildren. He was predeceased by his son, Gary, and grandson, Colin.

A memorial service was held in Royal Oak, MI on October 13. The family requests memorial donations be made to the Gary Derian Educational Memorial Foundation at the Armenian Missionary Association of America. □

Margaret Hartunian

Margaret Hartunian of Englewood, NJ passed away on November 8.

A long-time supporter of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, she was a member of the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, NJ. Margaret helped support the relief efforts in Armenia and was passionately concerned about the children in Armenia.

Margaret is survived by her nieces Debi Anoush Hart and Elizabeth Kinonian and their families.

A funeral service was held on November 14. The family requests that donations be sent in memory of Margaret to the Armenian Missionary Association of America Orphan and Child Care Program. □

Dora Koundakjian Johnson

Dora Koundakjian Johnson passed away on June 26 of pancreatic cancer at her home in Washington, DC.

She was born in 1937 in Beirut, Lebanon. Her native language was Armenian, but she also quickly learned Arabic, Turkish, French and English. In 1957, she received an associate's degree at Beirut College for Women (now Lebanese American University) and then came to the United States to study linguistics. In 1960, she graduated from Transylvania University in Lexington, KY.

Dora received a master's degree in linguistics in 1964 at the Hartford Seminary Foundation in Connecticut. She began her career at the Center for Applied Linguistics, a private, nonprofit organization in Washington, DC that supports and encourages the teaching of less commonly taught languages, such as Pashto, Hindi, Urdu, Turkish and Arabic.

She was a vivid presence in her community, serving on the Board of the Stoddard Baptist Nursing Home in Washington, DC and playing piano at the Sunday services of the Community of Christ fellowship in Mount Pleasant, a lay-led ecumenical congregation. For several years, she participated in the Christmas Eve pageant at the Washington National Cathedral, dressed as a clown. For 40 years, she helped feed the hungry and homeless of Washington, DC in the soup kitchens of Martha's Table and St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church.

On Christmas and Thanksgiving, there was always a place at her dinner table and plenty of food for anyone having nowhere else to go.



Dora is survived by her two children, Martin Johnson of St. Paul, MN, and Alicia Koundakjian of Washington, DC, who took her mother's maiden name; a brother, Philip Koundakjian of Des Moines, IA; and a granddaughter.

A funeral service celebrating Dora's life was held on August 25 at the Christ Lutheran Church in Washington, DC. The family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the Armenian Missionary Association of America. □

Haig Ohanian

Haig Ohanian, a supporter of the AMAA Child Sponsorship Program, passed away in Belmont, MA on October 27, 2012. He was 84.

Born in Boston, his family moved to Medford where he grew up. Haig inherited his kind spirit from his mother, Agvani. He graduated from Medford High School in 1946 where he played on the varsity soccer team. He met Roseen Bosnian at choir practice in 1948 at the Armenian Congregational Church in its original location in Porter Square and they were married in November 1951. He played the trombone in the Army Band, and after his tour of duty in the Korean War, came back to the Boston area to work in the family jewelry business that his father Leon had started as Leon Ohanian and Sons Jewelers. There he worked with his father and brother Ara.

Haig was an athlete and a musician and was a pillar of his Church. He and Roseen sang in the Church choir for over six decades and as a Deacon he gave of himself regularly to help the church in any way he could. Most importantly, he was devoted to his family and was always the rock that was there in a time of need. Haig never had an unkind word for anyone.

But at the center of Haig's life was his family. He was nothing but supportive of his children, his wife and his extended family.

He is survived by his wife, Roseen, his son, Eric, and his wife, Kelly, of Boxborough, MA and his daughter, Julie Kablout, and her husband, Mohamed, of Wilmington, NC and six grandchildren.

A funeral service was held at the Armenian Memorial Church in Watertown, MA on November 1. □

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Revelation 14:13



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Stewardship of God's Blessings: How to Give for His Glory!

For a Christian, Estate and Gift Planning is more than saving taxes and taking care of your loved ones.

2 Corinthians 9:7 reminds us "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) has faithfully used your gifts for carrying out His "good news" and compassion of help to all Armenians worldwide. There is no better way to thank God than to share His Word with others and give cheerfully. The AMAA would like to partner with you in carrying out your stewardship for your family, and loved ones and the Lord's work on Earth. The following are ways to make gifts to the AMAA:

Direct Giving

Gifts in the form of cash or through checks or credit/debit cards are the most common methods of direct charitable giving. All contributions to the AMAA qualify for income, gift and estate tax deduction, as an IRS 501 (c)(3) organization.

Giving Securities or Real Estate which has appreciated in value

Stocks, bonds, mutual funds and real estate that have increased in value can bring extra tax savings. Not only will the donor enjoy the tax deduction for the fair market value of the gift, but will also bypass capital gain tax that would otherwise be due if the securities or property were sold and the proceeds donated.

Charitable Lead or Remainder Trusts

The AMAA is given a certain percentage for a term of years and gets the property back or in the alternative, you retain a set percentage of the asset's value transferred to the AMAA, who takes on management, for a period of years or life of yourself or others, and at the termination, the asset held in a special perpetual endowment fund in the memory of a loved one, the income used for the specified purpose.

Giving Through a Will or Living Trust

Giving through wills, living trusts, life insurance policies and retirement accounts at death offer great opportunities for leaving a lasting legacy to charitable interests.

Endowment Funds

Gifts and bequests can be used to establish endowment funds in the name of the donor or someone the donor wishes to honor, either now or at your being with the Lord. These endowment funds are invested by the AMAA and the income is used to support designated purposes of the donor as part of the AMAA's worldwide outreach.

There are many ways you can make your giving meaningful and cheerful. Planning and timing are essential. Just take a moment and consider what your giving today will mean for you and for others tomorrow. God will bless you abundantly.

For additional information on giving and estate planning, please write or call in confidence the AMAA Executive Director.